Report to the Community 2018
The New York State Zoo

Before the dawn of modern America, massive bison and elk wandered the land now known as New York. Lynx prowled the dense forests, bald and golden eagles soared above and giant sturgeon filled the St. Lawrence and Hudson Rivers. Though that landscape and its inhabitants have changed, many of these animals can still be found here at the New York State Zoo at Thompson Park.

Covering 32 acres, the Zoo is home to a variety of species native to the Empire State. Some, like black bears and box turtles, live in abundance in many areas; while others like the Canada lynx and mountain lion are either rarely seen or gone all together. This makes our dual mission of conservation and education that much more important.

Guests can see black bears, mountain lion, elk, bald and golden eagles, rattlesnakes and the ever popular otters in natural habitats that reflect their life in nature. Also, the Heather A. Freeman Butterfly House is filled with native butterflies and moths in the summer—highlighted by the majestic monarch.

Mission

The New York State Zoo at Thompson Park is dedicated to providing natural world experiences that foster an appreciation of the Empire State’s ecosystems through conservation, education, scientific study and responsible recreation.
The only thing constant in the world is change!
I am sure most of you have heard that before, but
for the New York State Zoo at Thompson Park it is
particularly true. 2018 continued that theme; there
is now a new Executive Director/CEO, a new Curator
of Conservation Education and a new Director of
Marketing and Development.
While this is a significant change in leadership at
the Zoo, it is a planned change that is laying the
foundation for a bright and exciting future. The New York State Zoo has been an icon in the North Country
for years; we are committed to having that continue and, in fact, increasing our conservation and
education impact along with having an unmatched guest experience. To be able to do that will take time
and a lot of hard work, yet with the community’s support we will make it happen!

As I look back on 2018, I am pleased with how much we have accomplished! None of which would have been
possible without the continued support of our corporate, government and foundation partners. We opened
the new Olmsted Garden, with the support of Senator Patty Ritchie, and reinvigorated the Farm. The
Heather A. Freeman Butterfly House was once again a great success. Beyond that, we have spent the year
evaluating every aspect of the Zoo to make sure we are doing everything we can to be sure the animals in
our care are “happy” and healthy; that we are operating as efficiently as possible; and that we are meeting
our mission goals of conservation and education. That evaluation is on-going.

Finally, looking forward into 2019. We will be adding new animals and improving some habitats; the Board
and staff will be engaged in a strategic planning exercise that will determine our path to success over the
next five to ten years; we are adding new events; and – most importantly – we will be increasing our
conservation and education impact. In summary, 2018 was an exciting year of change and renewal that will
lead us into an exciting future. Please join me in reflecting on 2018.

- Lawrence Sorel
Chairman’s Message

It’s springtime and the New York State Zoo at Thompson Park is livening up! Over the winter, our staff has been working diligently to prepare for the season and we are excited to share the wonders of nature with everyone.

In last year’s report, I noted that it isn’t always the fastest or strongest animal that succeeds, but often the one that can best adapt. It is no different for your zoo – it’s adapting! As Larry mentioned, we’ve opened the Olmsted Garden and have rejuvenated some of our existing animal habitats. We couldn’t have done this or even have a Zoo without the support of our community and partners. We’ve also been very fortunate to have welcomed Larry and his wife Darlene to our community. He has brought a wealth of zoo expertise and has been a longtime supporter of our Zoo. Together with the rest of staff (both new and old) and continued support from our community, the Zoo is poised to make great strides in the coming years and adapt as changes continue.

Our mission is key to our direction and it’s exciting to see our renewed focus to education and conservation. For example, in 2019 the Zoo will be switching to paper straws and cardboard boxed water. It is a small but significant change that demonstrates a commitment to our environment and helps raise awareness. The Zoo also will be relaunching its docent program. A docent is a specially trained volunteer that helps to educate zoo guests. Visiting the Zoo is fun, yet, sharing the Zoo with others is even better!

The Thompson Park Conservancy’s board of directors (who oversee the operation of the Zoo) is proceeding with strategic planning, to evaluate, and advance the organization. We will look at everything with fresh eyes to ensure that we remain a relevant and sustainable part of our community. As we revisit our goals and set policy, we want to hear from you. Consider sharing your thoughts with a member of our Board or staff and … even better … get involved by volunteering!

Thank you to our dedicated staff and to the countless individuals, organizations and businesses that have helped to invigorate our Zoo this year. Again, we wouldn’t have a zoo without so many dedicated partners. Many are mentioned in this report, but not all, so thank you to everyone that has helped us keep the NYS Zoo a vibrant center of activity that connects people, animals and nature.

- Mark Irwin, DVM
STAFF

Administration
Lawrence Sorel ~ Executive Director/CEO
Gretchen Marsten ~ Administrative Assistant
Deborah Bleier ~ Director of Marketing & Development
Pamela Whitmire ~ Guest Experience Coordinator

Education
Renee Mullenax ~ Curator of Conservation Education

Buildings and Grounds
Tom Liptrott ~ Facilities Supervisor
Adam Adair ~ Grounds Assistant

Animal Care
Jen Graham ~ Lead Zoo Keeper
Beth Auld ~ Zoo Keeper
Brenda Fisk ~ Zoo Keeper
Joshua Patterson ~ Zoo Keeper
Claire Shannon ~ Zoo Keeper

Veterinary Care
David Plante, DVM
Monica Madera, DVM

VOLUNTEERS
Leigha Adair
Bruce Alexander
Jasmine Ambeiy
Aileen Anderson
Olivia Askins
Stacie Basford
Josh Baughn
Marishka Biela
Victoria Biela
Catherine Bracy
Kyla Brooks
Scott Bub
Joshua Caldwell
Autumn Calkins-Condiff
Joe & Jenna Carrick
Jennifer Chatterton
Logan Curtis
Christopher Dening
Deavan Desormeau
Cynthia Eisenhauer
Josephine Elie
Andrew Fern
Lauren Flick
Kelsey Fraser
Madeline Gist
Kassandra Grant
Grace Gregory
Megan Gregory
Andre Gutierrez
Dallas Hales
Chen Hao
Sydney Havens
Russell Henry
Kevin Hill
Alex Hooper
James & Lydia Huffman
Lydia Huffman
Mark Irwin
Ally Kilburn
Stephen Kim
Jordan Kottmyer
Laura Lachenauer
Julia Lavarnway
Spencer Lavin
Leo LeMay
Steven Londerville
Sandra Macy
Kelly Martin
Corey McDonald
Sha-Rell McNeil
Russell Mcullough
Andres Miles
Molly Miller
Heather Mitchell
Joseph Mprah
Cheryl Mullenax
Dulce Myers
Mark Naso
Christopher Nasworthy
Sicily Nelson
Elaine Newman
Susan Onkst
Arianna Pan
Ting Ting (Maria) Pan
Stephanie Phelps
Courtney Pittsley
Elizabeth Pompa
Breanna Randall
Austin Reed
Herb Reed
Jessica Rhoads
Chase Rodgers
Christopher Rodgers
Derek Rosbrook
Zikesha Rush
Shana Shanahan
Luise Shay
Cyanne Storms
Paige Thorne

Jennifer VanTassel
Ruth Vecchio
Ashley Wahlstrom
Kerri White
Alex Whitmire
Tommy Whitmire
Shelby Wilde
Deltra Willis
Michael Wilson
Supavit Wutthiprasertchai
Ralph Wylie

3,780 HOURS
$39,314 VALUE
# 2018 Highlights

## May
- Lawrence Sorel joined the Zoo as its Executive Director/CEO after retiring from Seneca Park Zoo in Rochester, NY. Larry brings over 40 years of Zoo administrative experience.
- The Heather A. Freeman Butterfly House opened on May 26th for its 23rd season.

## June
- The Zoo started working with the 1000 Islands International Tourism Council in order to expand its reach throughout the North Country.
- Renee Mullenax was hired as the Zoo's Curator of Conservation Education.
- ABC50 ran its first EdZOOcation segment.

## July
- The Olmsted Garden held its ribbon-cutting with Zoo supporter Senator Patty Ritchie.
- "Concert in the Park" went well in Thompson Park where the Zoo provided concessions.

## August
- Debbie Bleier started as the new Marketing & Development Director, bringing over 24 years of experience to the Zoo.
- Senator Patty Ritchie hosted a special family day at the Zoo bringing in nearly 1,000 visitors.
- Rosie, the elk, was euthanized due to complications of old age.

## September
- Installed new fence to create exercise area for the education birds.

## October
- Hosted a donor appreciation evening at the Zoo which was well-received.
- Dr. Wyatt spoke about the importance of conservation regarding sturgeon.
- BOO at the Zoo brought in over 500 trick-or-treaters.

## November
- ACR Healthcare awarded the Zoo during their gala as their top community partner. All education programs were reviewed and consulted upon.

## December
- "Angels for Animals" donation program was announced.
### Financial Report

#### Sources 2018*

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<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<td>Donor Support</td>
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<td>Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Municipal Support</td>
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<td>Grants</td>
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<td>Events</td>
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<td>Guest Services</td>
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<td>Endowment Income</td>
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<td>In Kind Support</td>
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**Total** $790,713

#### Uses

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<td>Education Program Supplies</td>
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<td>Insurance</td>
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<td>Facility Operations</td>
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<td>Wages &amp; Benefits</td>
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<td>Special Projects</td>
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</table>

**Total** $815,347

#### Excess of Operating Activities

- $24,634

*Numbers are a conservative estimate through December 31, 2018*
Thank You to Our Supporters

Joyce Alexander
Mary M. Anderson
Timothy Bardin
Madeleine Bennett
Bryanne Bowman
Nancy Boynton
Bernard & Beverly Brown
Robert and Carole Brown
William Couch
John Crasper
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William Doe
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Mark Walczyk
Leonard Walker
T. Urling & Mabel Walker
Mary Ann Yuhas

Canada Lynx
Annie P Ainsworth
Memorial Library

Please note that the donations outlined here were made between January 1, 2018 & December 31, 2018
If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Debbie Bleier at (315) 755-0895
Becomes a Partner

Volunteer
Your Time

Member
Year Round Zoo Visits

Guardian
Enrich Your Favorite Animal

Pledge
Recurring Donations

Sponsor
Your Favorite Animal

Donate
Annual Contribution

Bequest
Leave A Legacy

For more information on how you can help, please contact info@nyszoo.org or call (315) 755-0895
Creating connections, inspiring the next generation of conservationists, engaging our community, and creating lasting memories takes more than just one person; more than just one organization. Through partnership we are able to reach higher than before, leave a paw print on a child's heart, witness a non-releasable animal have a second chance at an enriched life, and so much more.

We look forward to partnering with you to make these ever so precious connections possible.

New York State Zoo at Thompson Park
1 Thompson Park
Watertown, NY 13601